

What is claimed is:

5 *Sub 1* 1. A network medium interface comprising first and second blocks, an external interface, and a switchable connection, wherein the switchable connection may be selectively configured either to internally connect the blocks to each other, or to connect one of the blocks to a transmit portion and/or a receive portion of the external interface.

10 2. The device of claim 1, wherein the external interface is a media independent interface (MII).

15 3. The device of claim 2 wherein the MII transmits and receives data in four-bit wide data stream..

20 4. The device of claim 1, wherein one of the blocks includes a physical layer device (PHY).

25 5. The device of claim 1, wherein one of the blocks includes a media access controller (MAC).

6. The device of claim 1, wherein the switchable connection is a first switchable connection, and further comprising a third block and a second switchable connection which may selectively configured either to internally connect the third block to the first block, or to connect either the first sub and/or the third sub to the transmit portion and/or the receive portion of the external interface.

7. The device of claim 6, wherein the first block includes a media access controller (MAC).

8. The device of claim 6, wherein the third block includes a bus interface.

9. The device of claim 8, wherein the bus interface is a peripheral component interconnect (PCI) interface.

10. The device of claim 6, wherein the second block includes a physical layer device (PHY).

11. The device of claim 6, wherein the first and second switches may be configured to test operation of the first block by connecting receive and transmit ends of to respective portions of the external interface.

12. A method of testing operation of an internal block of a network medium interface, comprising:

reconfiguring the device so that a normally-internally-connected connection of the block are connected to an external interface;  
inputting test signals to the block; and  
evaluating output of the block.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the reconfiguring includes connecting two normally-internally-connected connections of the block to the external interface.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the reconfiguring includes configuring one or more switchable connections operatively coupled to the block.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the configuring includes sending signals to the one or more switchable connections.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the sending signals includes sending the signals through pins of the network medium interface.

17. The method of claim 12, wherein the external interface is a media independent interface (MII).

18. The method of claim 12, wherein the block includes a media access controller (MAC).

19. The method of claim 12, wherein the block includes a physical layer device (PHY).

20. The method of claim 12, wherein the block includes a second external interface.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the second external interface is a bus connector.

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